

6.01: Consider Amended Sketch Plan for Odyssey Homes; Case of Odyssey Homes (Project No. 19-140)

Presentation

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl presented the Staff Report stating that staff recommends that the applicant proceed to the Preliminary Plat phase with revisions outlined in the staff review files. She stated that a letter of opposition was included in the case.

Commission Business

Commissioner Gengler asked the cul-de-sac standards.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that the standard would be 600 feet for cul-de-sac length.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that he does not recall a 900-foot cul-de-sac length for this type of density, although there are R-1 developments with longer cul-de-sacs.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl provided input from the County comments related to Nowthen and emergency access.

Commissioner Anderson stated that he does not believe he would support a 900-foot cul-de-sac.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that recently there was a requirement for a certain size for a bus to turn around and asked that size.

City Planner Anderson explained that within the rural area a 65-foot radius is required and in the urban area a 60-foot radius is required.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that she spoke with Public Safety and the comment was that the cul-de-sac would need to be full-sized in order to accommodate larger vehicles (plows, garbage trucks, etc.).

Commissioner VanScoy commented that the right-in/right-out option seems like it would be a good compromise but would require a divider because people would attempt to turn in. He assumed that most of the traffic leaving would be heading towards Highway 47.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that the applicant is going to propose a right exit only, which has not yet been vetted by Anoka County.

Commissioner Woestehoff asked if the County concern would be the connection to 146th and that traffic would cut through.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl believed that the issue was with the spacing.

Commissioner Woestehoff suggested removing the connection to 146th which would eliminate the cut through ability, making the access on Nowthen with the cul-de-sac at the other side of the development.

Commissioner Anderson asked if the development checks all the boxes for R-2 and this type of development.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl confirmed that in general all the bulk standards are met with the sketch plan, though items like storm water management, landscaping, density transitioning, traffic, etc. will need to be addressed with the preliminary plat.

Jason Bebeau, 15363 Radium St NW, stated that as the developer his goal would be to have a right on only onto CR 5, with no entrance into the development from CR 5.

Craig Jochum, Hakanson Anderson, referenced a City comment of at least 25 feet, noting that 50 feet is included. He stated that they would ensure that emergency vehicles have access.

Commissioner VanScoy referenced the plan to have a right-out only and no entrance and asked for input from the engineer.

Mr. Jochum stated that the County stated that they would consider a right-in/right-out with a turn lane. He stated that they have not yet proposed the right-out only option to the County.

Alena Hunter, 14628 Helium St, thanked everyone for the opportunity to have the open house. She described the path traffic takes from Highway 47 onto and along CR 5. She stated that if the only entrance into the development is from 146th that will cause a bigger traffic problem on CR 5. She believed a right-in/right-out may be a good solution. She believed that the intersection of CR 5 and 146th is already a dangerous intersection and should be addressed before this development could be added. She stated that the existing trail stops before this development property and does not continue until Sunwood, although there is a full trail on the other side of CR 5. She stated that there are arborvitaes that are very dense and could solve the problem of screening. She stated that drainage is a huge issue as the property sits in a low spot. She stated that she was happy to hear that the homes would be priced around \$250,000 to \$300,000. She stated that she will look at the development the developer completed in Isanti. She commented that she wants to see a high-quality development and wants this to be reviewed from a holistic perspective. She asked the Commission to think this through as this development will be right off a major City roadway that already has traffic/safety issues.

Chad Lindgren, 5561 145th Circle, stated that traffic is a big issue for this area. He stated that many residents that attended the open house were concerned with tree density. He understands that the developer meets all the requirements for the development. He liked that the developer has stated that they will try to save the trees that can be saved. He agreed that arborvitaes would be a great addition as they grow quickly and provide great transition. He appreciated the time of the Commission and developer to listen to the residents earlier at the open house.

Patrick Hampton, 15551 Potassium St NW, stated that he is the owner of the northern parcel of land and thanked the Commission for providing him an opportunity to speak. He stated that the Commission seems to be honest and fair and attempts to look at the issue from all sides. He stated that he has been on both sides of the issue and provided background on an issue that occurred 15 years ago when a development was proposed across from his parcel which would cause him to lose land and be assessed. He stated that he spent three years and \$20,000 fighting against the City. He stated that now he is on the other side and has welcomed the input from the residents. He stated that in this case the residents are not going to lose land or be assessed. He agreed that as many trees should be saved as possible, but also commented that it is his land and they are his trees. He stated that he wants to sell his land to help with his ongoing medical issues. He stated that the neighbors have enjoyed the benefits of his property being undeveloped for many years without paying any of the associated costs. He commented that its frustrating that this process is moving slowly and appreciated if this could continue to move forward. He thanked the Commission for listening to concerns and being fair in its consideration. He stated that he has lived in his home for over 60 years and would hate to lose the home that he and his elderly mother live in because of the medical expenses and issues he has, when the sale of this property would resolve that issue. He recognized that there are issues with traffic because Ramsey is becoming a City rather than a little rural township.

Chairperson Bauer explained the intent of a sketch plan, which allows the Commission and residents to provide input to the developer before additional expense is incurred developing the Preliminary Plat elements.

Commissioner Anderson commented that the developer should proceed to Preliminary Plat but work with staff to address the questions raised tonight at the meeting and through the open house.

Commissioner Peters asked what is keeping CR 5 from having the speed limit lowered, noting that there are now two elementary schools along that roadway.

Commissioner Woestehoff stated that he had the same concern with Alpine and learned that a speed study could result in a higher speed limit posted, as the County will adjust to what drivers are driving.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that she would speak with Public Works, as the City could send in a request to have the speed limit reviewed.

Commissioner Gengler stated that this is a viable option for this site, and she likes the density, but the CR 5 piece is the problematic piece for her.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that he is comfortable as long as there could be some type of access on the southern end, noting that he would prefer the right-in/right-out. He acknowledged that would be a decision of the County. He stated that the traffic on CR 5 is what it is and adding a few more vehicles will not significantly change the conditions.

Ms. Hunter stated that there was discussion at the open house related to a left-hand turn lane northbound on CR 5 at 146th and asked if the City could ask the County about that option. She noted that this may be an opportunity for the developer to fund that improvement.

Mr. Hampton thanked the Commission for providing him the opportunity to vent and for agreeing to allow the project to move forward. He stated that he has been trying to sell the land since May and the developer began this process with the City in September, so it can just be frustrating with the length of time needed for these types of projects to move ahead.

Mr. Bebeau stated that he agrees that the left turn lane would be beneficial but did not believe that is an expense that the developer should pay for, as that would require widening CR 5. He recognized that the turn lane would benefit the hundreds of other homes in that area, rather than the additional 26 homes. He noted that type of expense would most likely kill this project.

Chairperson Bauer stated that he would not think that expense would be of the developer.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that it is her understanding that if a development warrants a change to a major road, the developer is responsible to making the improvement. She explained that if the County required that improvement, the developer would be responsible.

Chairperson Bauer commented that the issue already exists without this development present.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl explained that if the traffic levels are changing because of this development and the improvement is required to support the development, the developer would be responsible.

Mr. Bebeau stated that he does not believe that the County would require the left turn lane. He recognized that if the right-in/right-out is approved/selected, he would be responsible for constructing the right turn lane.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that the County traffic report has no discussion requiring left turn lanes and did not address the 146th intersection at all.

Chairperson Bauer stated that the property is zoned R-2 and this is on the low end of the density that would be allowed. He agreed that the County should have input as to what is considered safe and what could/should be done.

It was the consensus of the Commission that the applicant moves forward to the Preliminary Plat phase, addressing the concerns raised.